

Understanding Culture, Society and Politics

Quarter 1 – Module 4: Significance of Cultural, Social, Political and Economic Symbols and Practices

Lesson

4

**Significance of Cultural,
Social, Political and Economic
Symbols and Practices**



What is It

In this part of your journey, we provide something for you to read to deepen your understanding about the topic.

Please do it with comprehension to discover knowledge that will help you out in dealing with the next phase of your quest.

Think it over:

1. When we try to compare then and now, what are differences in terms of how people carry out things physically, culturally, and socio-politically?

2. What are the different stages in the cultural development of human?

3. How does human grow culturally, socially, and politically in Paleolithic Period? Neolithic Period? Age of Metal?

4. Why do you think people need a transformation or evolution to adapt to his/her environment?

5. Do you observe practices that preserve culture in today's living? Explain by giving an example.

6. As a person, how do you progress? List down at least five things that you can't do 10 years ago, and the things that you can do at present.

10 years ago, I CANNOT	At present, I CAN

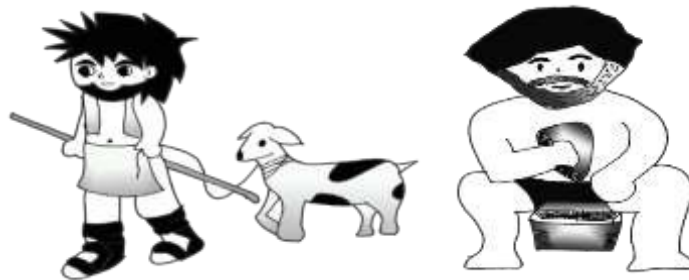
HUMAN CULTURAL EVOLUTION

It is a saying that “human has no contentment”. As the environment changes, we continuously grow and find ways to make maximize our effort as we live. It is very evident in the different stages of human cultural evolution: Palaeolithic Period, Neolithic Period, and Age of Metal.

The term “Palaeolithic” was coined by archaeologist John Lubbock in 1865. It is derived the from Greek word, *palaaios*, which means "old"; and, *lithos*, "stone", In short, the Palaeolithic Period, which happened 2.5 million years ago, is also known as "Old Stone Age".

In the Palaeolithic period, the Earth was extremely cold and ocean levels were much lower than they are now. Due to the cold climate, much of the Stone Age is also called the Ice Age.

During these years, people were nomads and able to use simple tools and weapons made of unpolished stone. The caves served as their shelter.



Similarly, this was the time when people discovered to use the fire, through the use of stone, for their protection against cold temperature and to cook their own food.

Human beings in this time were grouped together in small societies such as bands, and subsisted by gathering plants and fishing, hunting or scavenging wild animals. Also in this era, according to study of Dr. Jesus T. Peralta of NCCA, respect is given to age, and individual prowess and ability are recognized. There are no leaders that could be said to be above everybody else and whose commands are obeyed without question. In some cases, one who is known for good decisions is consulted when a problem arises; or well-known hunter will be asked to lead a hunting group.

Likewise, the term “Neolithic” also comes from the same archaeologist and from the Greek word “neo” which means new and “lithos” meaning stone or in short, the “New Stone Age” which was happened for about 10,000 B.C. In this period, the Cro Magnon disappeared and the new people who are considered the modern man appeared.

The **Neolithic Revolution** is also called as the First Agricultural Revolution. During this period, there was a wide-scale transition of many human cultures from a lifestyle of hunting and gathering to of agriculture and settlement kind of society which eventually led to population increase. People depend on domesticated plants and animals. They learned to create such crafts as pottery and weaving. They likewise developed boat as means of transportation and for fishing as well.





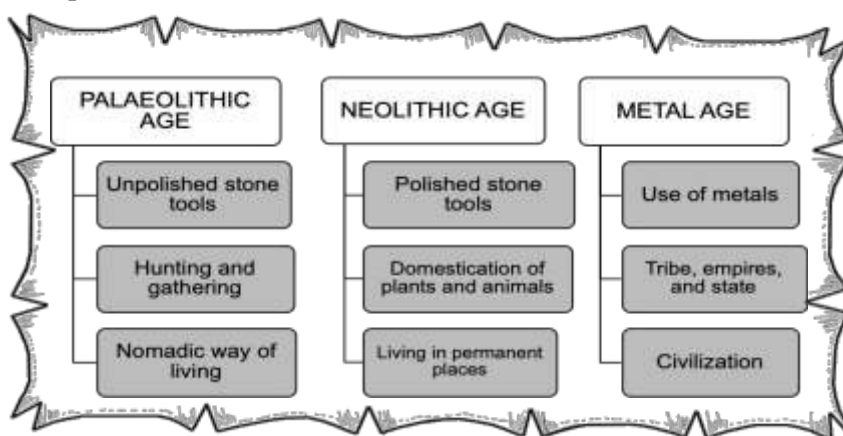
From being nomads during the early stage, human began to develop a sedentary type of society of which they built-up villages and towns.

Furthermore, they were never contented of their accomplishments. They kept on discovering things for their own convenience. So, they discovered metals, and they gradually abandoned stone as the basic element for their instrument and tools

This period was known as Age of Metals (4000 B.C – 1500 B.C). The used of metal such as bronze, copper, and iron produced a new historical development from the cradle civilization of Egypt, Mesopotamia, Persia including the India, and China which later spread throughout Asia.

There were three stages distinguished within this Age due to the different types of metals that were used: The Copper Age, the Bronze Age and the Iron Age; copper was the first known metal, it is of a low hardness and it was used to make ornaments; bronze is an alloy of copper and tin and it is harder and stronger than copper. Several eastern Mediterranean peoples discovered this metallurgy and progressed rapidly.

During this age, agricultural tools were developed with bronze, such as plows and sickles, military weapons like swords, spears and shields, as well as household utensils like jars, bowls and cups. Likewise, a more developed social, cultural, political, and economic system were improved. Tribes, empires, and state were recognized at this point.



EARLY CIVILIZATION and RISE of the STATE

Ancient State and Civilization

One of the earliest states and civilizations was found in the Fertile Crescent which is known as the Mesopotamian civilization. The word Mesopotamia is a Greek word for “*Land between two rivers*” which is often referred to as the cradle of civilization. It is the region of the Western Asia located between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. It is known as the Fertile Crescent where the first evidence of agriculture was also found.

Here the first human civilizations were taking the earliest steps from hunter-gatherer society into settled community.

Moreover, it is in Mesopotamia that the history writing appeared as early as over 5,000 years ago. This invention was so important that it marks the end of the Prehistory, and the beginning of history. One of the first writing systems, the Cuneiform, is one of the most important civilizations in the history of Mesopotamian culture.

Every city in Mesopotamia had its own government, rulers, warriors, patron god, and functioned like an independent country. Mesopotamian cities were Ur, Uruk, Kish, Lagesh. There is a temple at the center of each city called a ziggurat (a massive, tiered, pyramid-shaped structure).

There was also what we called Mesopotamian warrior-gods(2,400-2,500 B.C.)who govern and protect the people under its government. Military commanders eventually became monarch creating a new structure of government called a Dynasty. It is a series of rulers descending from a single-family line. The Akkadian Empire lasted about 200 years. In the year 2350–2150 B.C, Babylonian Empire overtook Sumerians around 2000 B.C., and they built capital, the Babylon, on Euphrates River.

Another ancient states and civilizations was the Egyptian civilization. It emerged more than 5,000 years ago along the River Nile in the north-east of Africa. The Ancient Egyptians lived near the River Nile because of its fertile land suitable for growing crops and domestication of animals. Each year, water from the Nile rose and flooded the area. When the water went back, it left mud that made the fields fertile.

Egyptians called their king a pharaoh. The pharaoh was all- powerful: He passed laws, He ruled the country, He owned most of the land, and He controlled trade and led the armies. Egyptians believed that the pharaohs were gods.

Modern State and Civilization

In the European continent, several states and civilization grew tremendously over centuries. In England, around 1500s, most of the people lived in small villages. They paid tithes to their feudal landlords. Henry VII won the War of the Roses in England, which led into what is known as the Tudor dynasty, and begun the development of the English nation-state.

In Spain in the year 1492, Spanish monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella took Spain back from the Muslim. It became the era of Spain as a global power.

In France, Louis XIV of France created an absolute monarchy. France became the dominant power in Europe. When The French Revolution broke out, it created the modern French nation-state, which sparked nationalism around Europe.

In 1914, when various nation-states started to claim their power and superiority over all the nations in the world, the World War I begun until 1918. In 1919, Treaty of Versailles ended the World War I. It divided several multinational empires that led to the creation of several new nation-states.

In 1939, the World War II started until 1945. The end of World War II led to the formation of United Nations in 1945.

The State of the People: Democratic State

In the recent decade after the two World Wars, people are becoming more active in their government and state affairs, in which people become the source of political power and government rules. This evolution in the government is known as the process of democratization, or simply democracy – the rule of the people.

Democratization is the transition to a more democratic political regime, including substantive political changes moving in a democratic direction. It may be the transition from an authoritarian regime to a full democracy, a transition from an authoritarian political system to a semi-democracy or transition from a semi-authoritarian political system to a democratic political system. What is a democracy? Moreover, a democracy is a form of government where the citizens of the nation have the power to vote.

Types of Democracy

There are several different types of democracies;

- (1) **Representative democracy** is a system where citizens choose government representatives among their citizens,
- (2) **Direct democracy** is when the citizens form a governing body and vote directly on issues,
- (3) **Constitutional democracy** limits the powers of government through the nation's constitution.